Weird, Spooky, Supernatural Stories

The BEYOND

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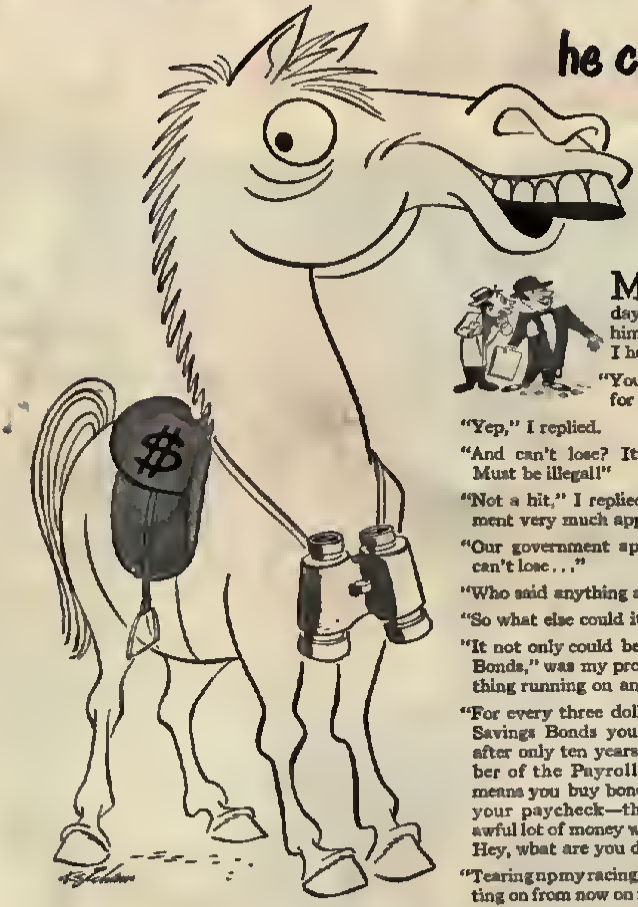


GALLOWS IN THE SKY

DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY

and other strange stories

"There's no such animal," he cried!



MY FRIEND and I were picking the ponies one day when I started telling him about *a sure thing* I heard about.

"You say it pays four bucks for every three?" he asked.

"Yep," I replied.

"And can't lose? It *automatically* wins? Must be illegal!"

"Not a bit," I replied. "In fact, the government very much approves..."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose..."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse...?"

"It not only could be—but is—U. S. Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply. "The surest thing running on any track today.

"For every three dollars you invest in U. S. Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years. And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds *automatically* from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you're not looking Hey, what are you doing?"

"Tearing up my racing form! The horse I'm betting on from now on is U. S. Savings Bonds."

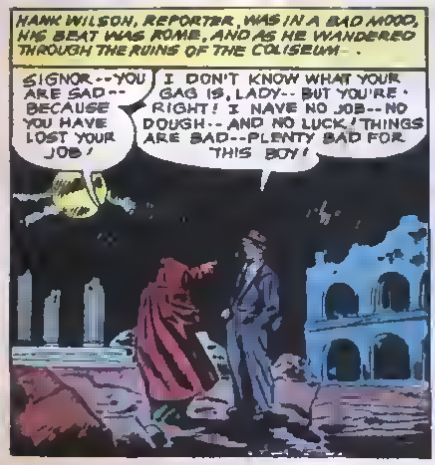
Automatic saving is <u>sure</u> saving—U.S. Savings Bonds

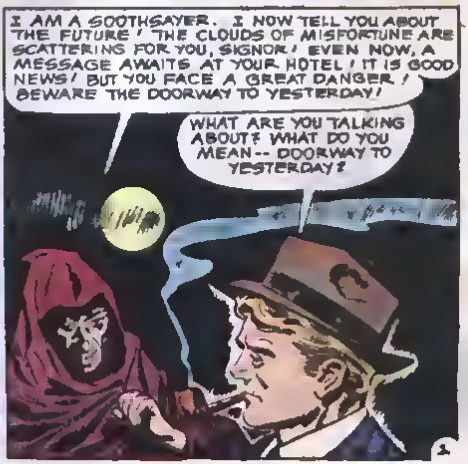
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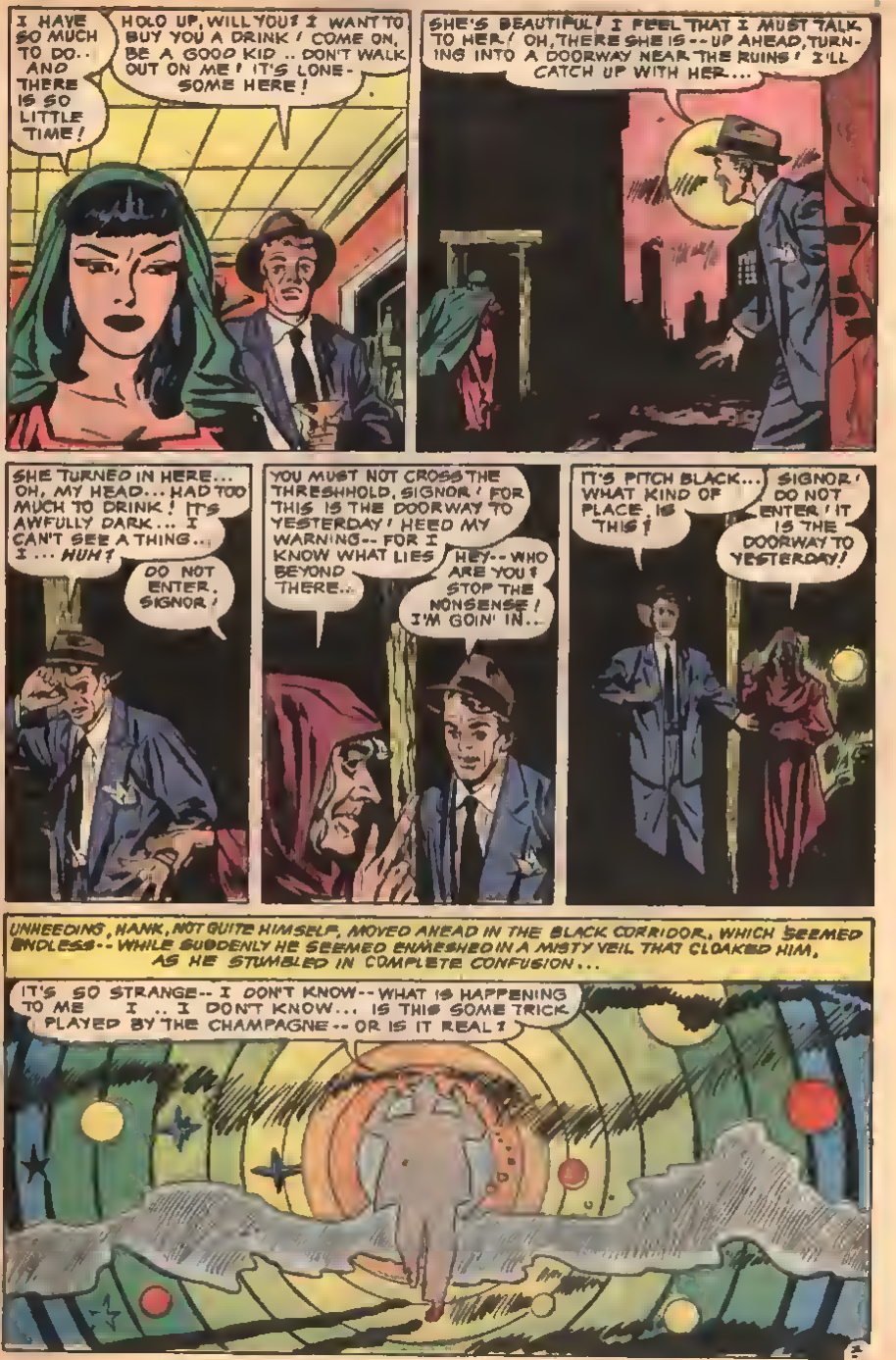
The DOORWAY to YESTERDAY








I HAVE SPOKEN! BEWARE THE DOORWAY TO TOMORROW!
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! THERE'S A LOT OF QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK YOU!
WELL I'LL BE.. SHE'S GONE! HOW ABOUT THAT? SHE JUST STEPPED BACK AND DISAPPEARED! MAYBE I'M GOING NUTS! OR ELSE IT'S SOME KIND OF GAG! I'D BETTER GO BACK TO THE HOTEL BEFORE I WIND UP IN A LOONY BIN!
AT WILSON'S HOTEL...
A CABLEGRAM? I WASN'T EXPECTING...
SIGNOR WILSON! FOR YOU. A CABLEGRAM FROM NEW YORK!
SAY--THAT OLD WOMAN SAID THERE'D BE A MESSAGE FOR ME WHEN I GOT BACK... I WONDER...
IS IT GOOD NEWS, SIGNOR?
GOOD! OH, BROTHER! IT COULDN'T BE BETTER! A JOB-- BACK IN GOOD OLD NEW YORK! AND THERE'S MONEY WAITING FOR ME AT THE BANK-- WITH PLANE TICKETS! WHAT A BREAK!
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO? CELEBRATE! A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE! YES, SIR! HANK WILSON'S LUCK HAS TURNED!
THAT IS GOOD, SIGNOR WILSON-- THIS MORNING YOU WERE SAD-- AND IT IS NOT RIGHT TO BE SAD IN ROME!
AND A LITTLE LATER, AT A NEARBY BAR...
FILL 'ER UP, BARTENDER-- WITH THE BEST IN THE HOUSE! IT'S A PARTY!
SI, SIGNOR...
I WISH THE JOINT WAS CROWDED, SO I COULD SET UP DRINKS FOR THE HOUSE ... I HATE TO CELEBRATE ALONE. I... SAY, WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, LADY? YOU WEREN'T HERE A SECOND AGO!
I AM HERE.. BUT I CANNOT STAY... I MUST NOT LINGER!


I HAVE SO MUCH TO DO.. AND THERE IS SO LITTLE TIME!
HOLD UP, WILL YOU? I WANT TO BUY YOU A DRINK! COME ON, BE A GOOD KID .. DON'T WALK OUT ON ME! IT'S LONESOME HERE!
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! I FEEL THAT I MUST TALK TO HER! OH, THERE SHE IS -- UP AHEAD, TURNING INTO A DOORWAY NEAR THE RUINS! I'LL CATCH UP WITH HER....
SHE TURNED IN HERE... OH, MY HEAD... HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK! IT'S AWFULLY DARK... I CAN'T SEE A THING.. I... HUM?
DO NOT ENTER, SIGNOR!
YOU MUST NOT CROSS THE THRESHHOLD, SIGNOR! FOR THIS IS THE DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY! HEED MY WARNING -- FOR I KNOW WHAT LIES BEYOND THERE..
HEY -- WHO ARE YOU? STOP THE NONSENSE! I'M GOIN' IN..
IT'S PITCH BLACK... WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS?
SIGNOR! DO NOT ENTER! IT IS THE DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY!
UNHEEDING, HANK, NOT QUITE HIMSELF, MOVED AHEAD IN THE BLACK CORRIDOR, WHICH SEEMED ENDLESS -- WHILE SUDDENLY HE SEEMED ENMESHED IN A MISTY VEIL THAT CLOAKED HIM, AS HE STUMBLED IN COMPLETE CONFUSION...
IT'S SO STRANGE -- I DON'T KNOW -- WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ME I .. I DON'T KNOW... IS THIS SOME TRICK PLAYED BY THE CHAMPAGNE -- OR IS IT REAL?

SUDDENLY, THE VEIL LIFTED, AND HANK FOUND HIMSELF IN STRANGE SURROUNDINGS -- IN A STREET OF ANCIENT ROME, AND HE WAS DRESSED IN THE GARB OF A ROMAN SLAVE...

HOW DID I GET HERE? WHY -- IT'S AS THOUGH I'VE BEEN THROWN BACK THROUGH THE CENTURIES -- AND I'M DRESSED LIKE A ROMAN SLAVE! I EVEN HAVE A SLAVE'S EAR-MARK!

SUDDENLY..

THAT ONE SOLDIERS! SEIZE HIM -- AND THROW HIM INTO THE DUNGEON OF TIBERIUS!

IT'S THE GIRL! THE ONE I SAW IN THE BAR!

HEY! TELL THEM TO LAY OFF! THIS IS ALL A MISTAKE! IT'S CRAZY!

TO THE DUNGEON OF TIBERIUS WITH HIM!

HANK WAS DRAGGED THROUGH THE STREETS TO A DUNGEON, WHERE HE WAS THROWN INTO A CELL...

YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! I TELL YOU -- YOU HAVE THE WRONG GUY! I'M AN AMERICAN CITIZEN!

SILENCE! I, NERISSA, WILL SPEAK!

I HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE FROM TOMORROW THROUGH THE DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY! BY THIS SIGN -- YOU WILL DIE -- FOR I BELONG TO THE CULT OF THE TIBERIANS -- AND WE WORSHIP DEATH!

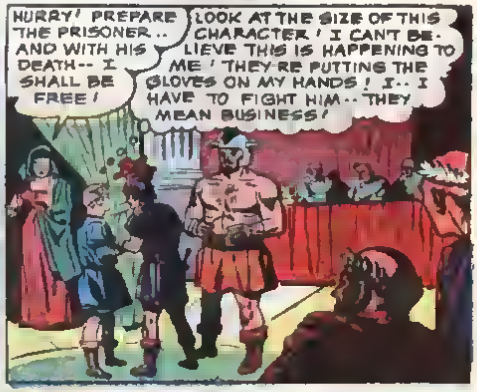
CUT IT OUT! THIS IS NUTS... ALL THIS BUSINESS ABOUT THE DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY! IF IT'S A GAG -- IT'S GONE TOO FAR! I'VE GOT TO GET TO NEW YORK!

GAG? I HAVE BROUGHT YOU BACK TO ANCIENT ROME, HANK WILSON -- BECAUSE YOU MUST DIE! I HAVE A SOOTHSAYER'S CURSE ON ME -- EITHER I FIND A VICTIM IN MY STEAD, OR I DIE AT THE FULL OF THE MOON!

THERE IS ONE WAY FOR YOU TO GO! YOU MUST FIGHT ARMENIUS, THE VISIGOTH! YOU WILL FIGHT HIM TO THE DEATH WITH CESTAE! IF YOU TRIUMPH AND KILL HIM -- YOU ARE FREE! IF HE KILLS YOU -- THE CURSE IS LIFTED FROM ME!

CESTAE? YOU MEAN THE BOXING GLOVES WITH SPIKES ON THEM? LISTEN, SISTER -- I DON'T GET ALL THIS -- BUT WHEN I LEAVE HERE -- I'M TELLING THE COPS! THEY OUGHT TO CLEAN THIS PLACE OUT!


THOSE OF THE CULT ARE ASSEMBLED IN THE GREAT HALL, NERISSA! THEY AWAIT THE PRISONER... FOR ARMENIUS THE VISIGOTH IS ALREADY HERE!
LEAD THE PRISONER THERE! I WILL FOLLOW!


HANK WAS LEAD TO THE GREAT HALL... AND THERE HE FACED THE GIANT ARMENIUS, BEFORE A LARGE AUDIENCE...
HURRY! PREPARE THE PRISONER... AND WITH HIS DEATH-- I SHALL BE FREE!
LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THIS CHARACTER! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING TO ME! THEY'RE PUTTING THE GLOVES ON MY HANDS! I-- I HAVE TO FIGHT HIM-- THEY MEAN BUSINESS!


HE IS READY!
GOOD! WHEN I DROP THIS KERCHIEF... THEY WILL FIGHT!


AT THE SIGNAL, ARMENIUS CHARGED FORWARD, WITH A WILD BELLOW.
YOU WILL DIE, OUTLANDER!
NOT SO FAST, MY BOY!


IT'S A GOOD THING I LEARNED TO BOX-- THIS GUY DOESN'T KNOW A THING! HE'S LIKE AN OX-- BUT IF HE EVER HITS ME, IT'S CURTAINS!
KILL HIM, ARMENIUS! KILL HIM!

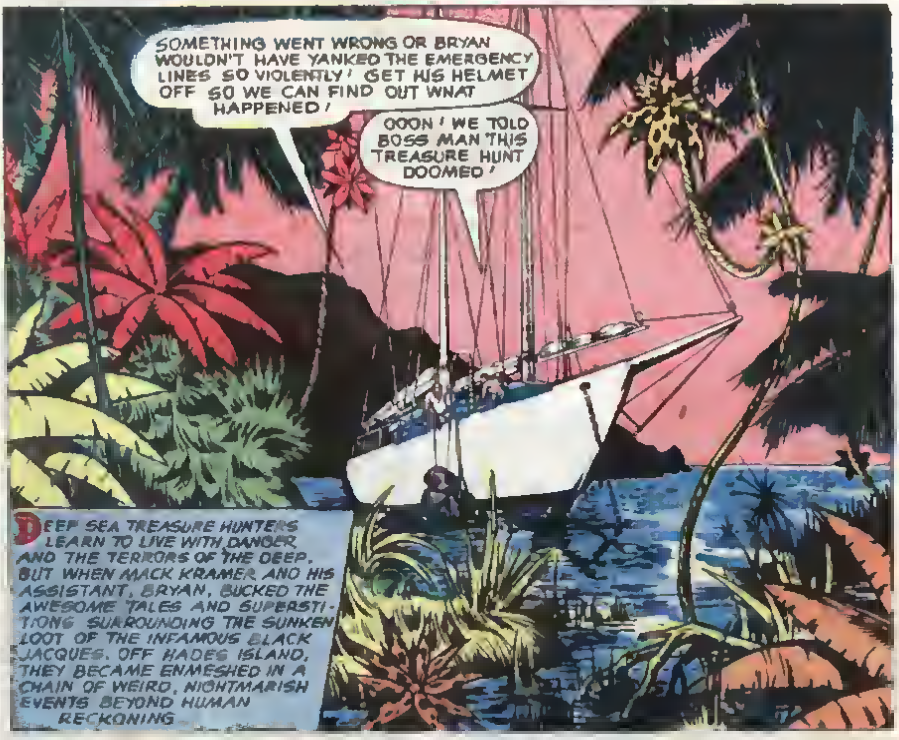

IT WAS A TERRIFIC BATTLE, WITH THE NIMBLE FOOTED AMERICAN AVOIDING THE POWERHOUSE SWINGS OF THE GIANT GLADIATOR, SCORING TELLING BLOWS, UNTIL...

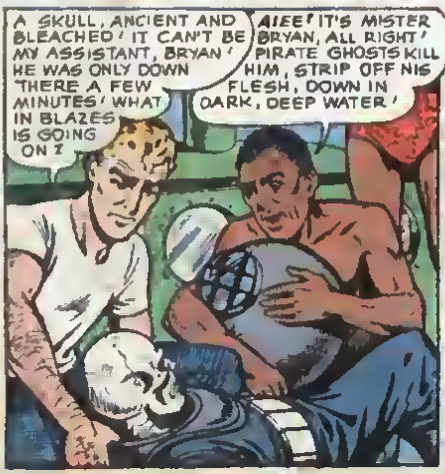

THERE!

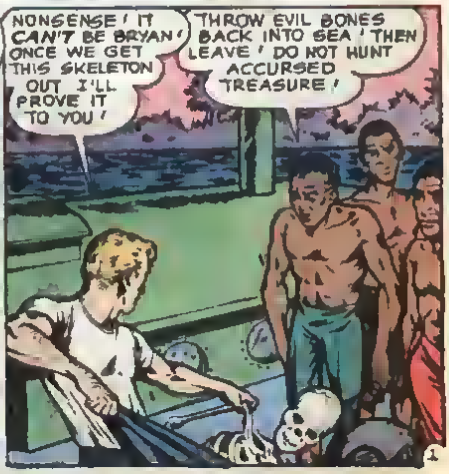

AHH! HE HAS TRIUMPHED! ARMENIUS IS DEAD! NOW I WILL DIE AT THE FULL OF THE MOON -- UNLESS I CAN STILL SOMEHOW CLAIM MY VICTIM!
ALL RIGHT, NERISSA--THERE'S YOUR BOY! HE'S DEAD! IT WAS EITHER HIM OR ME! NOW I WANT OUT OF HERE!
YOU ARE A GREAT GLADIATOR HANK WILSON -- AND SO HANDSOME!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? YOU DON'T SCARE ME EVEN A LITTLE
I DO NOT MEAN TO SCARE YOU! I WISH TO BESTOW UPON YOU, THE REWARD TO THE VICTOR!
WAIT, NERISSA! WAIT!
I CANNOT WAIT, HANK WILSON! WE WILL MEET AGAIN, BY THE FULL OF THE MOON, FOR YOU HAVE TASTED THE KISS OF DEATH!
NERISSA! NERISSA!
AND THEN... HANK WAS SUDDENLY BACK IN MODERN ROME...
NERISSA!
THE AMERICAN MUST HAVE DRUNK TOO MUCH VINO -- LOOK AT HIM!
I-- I GUESS IT WAS ALL A DREAM CAUSED BY THE CHAMPAGNE! I-- I JUST CAN'T EXPLAIN IT!


TWO NIGHTS LATER, AT THE AIRPORT...
FLIGHT ONE THIRTY-SIX FOR NEW YORK! ALL ABOARD!
THOU HAST DISOBEYED ME! THOU HAST GONE THROUGH THE DOORWAY TO YESTERDAY! BEWARE! FOR TONIGHT THE MOON IS FULL!
YOU! CUT IT OUT! I'M GETTING OUT OF THIS TOWN, RIGHT NOW!
MOMENTS LATER, ABOARD THE PLANE... AS IT TAKES OFF...
YOU HAVE NOT ESCAPED ME YET, YOU KNOW..
THE DEATH'S HEAD RING! THE RING OF TIBERIUS! NERISSA!
YES, IT IS I! I TOLD YOU WE'D MEET AGAIN!
YOU! THE STEWARDESS! I'LL TURN YOU IN -- YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU SHOULD BE LOCKED UP!
SUDDENLY, AS THE PLANE BECOMES AIRBORNE, IT CRASHES, AND...
CRASH!
OHH!
LATER.
A FREAK ACCIDENT AS WE WERE TAKING OFF.. AND ONLY ONE MAN KILLED -- IN SUCH A STRANGE WAY -- HIS NECK WAS BROKEN AS HE WAS HURLED FORWARD -- HIS SAFETY BELT WAS DEFECTIVE!
SAY... I FOUND THIS RING! IT'S A STRANGE ONE -- A DEATH'S HEAD!
I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT IT -- I HAVE TO MAKE MY REPORT..
DON'T FORGET TO ADD THAT THE STEWARDESS IS MISSING, TOO! IT WAS HER FIRST FLIGHT -- AND NO ONE CAN FIND HER! SHE SEEMS TO HAVE VANISHED IN THIN AIR! FUNNY... I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!
THE END

The DEAD GUARD the GOLD

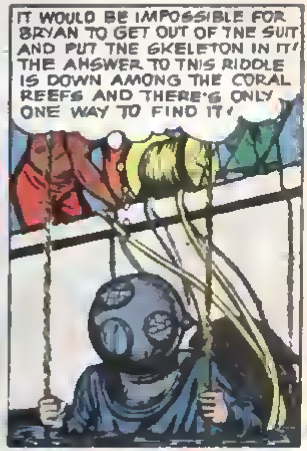




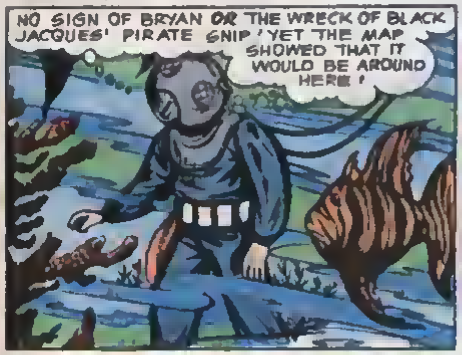






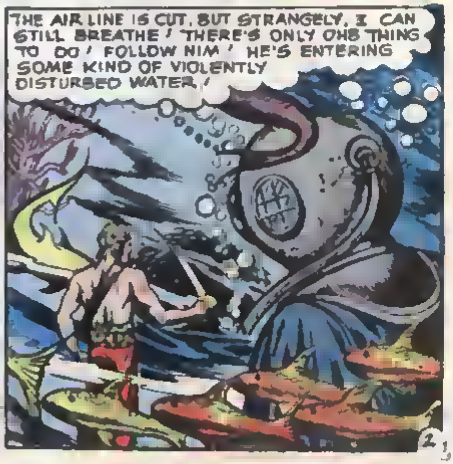


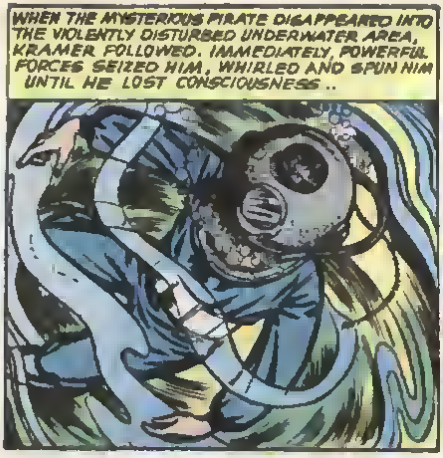
DEEP IN THIS SHADOWY UNDERWATER WORLD, MACK KRAMER FELT STRANGE PRESSURES, AND UNEASINESS CHILLED HIS BLOOD. AN UNEXPLAINABLE SENSE OF DREAD AND FOREBODING SWEPT OVER HIM ..

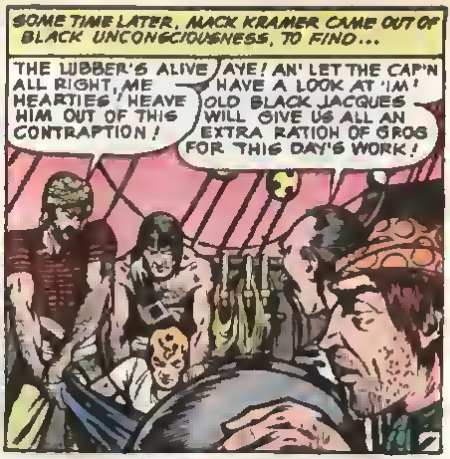


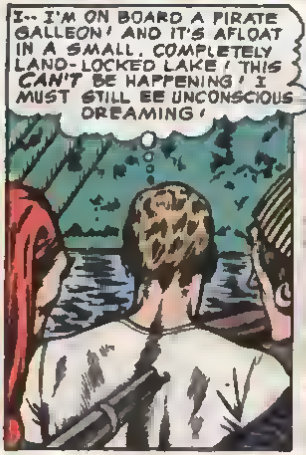






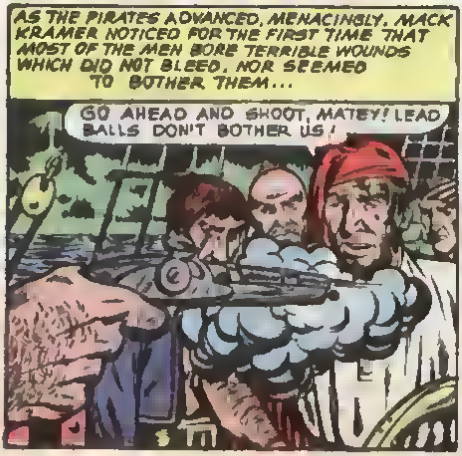

WHEN THE MYSTERIOUS PIRATE DISAPPEARED INTO THE VIOLENTLY DISTURBED UNDERWATER AREA, KRAMER FOLLOWED. IMMEDIATELY, POWERFUL FORCES SEIZED HIM, WHIRLED AND SPUN HIM UNTIL HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS ..

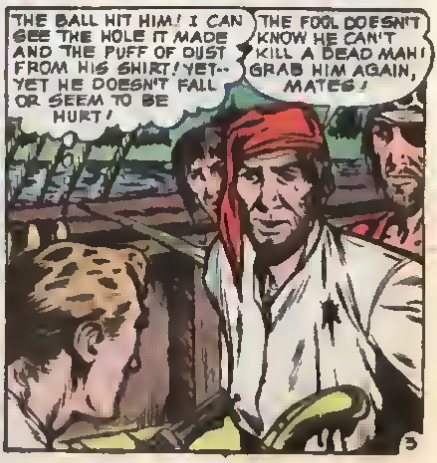

SOME TIME LATER, MACK KRAMER CAME OUT OF BLACK UNCONSCIOUSNESS, TO FIND...
THE LUBBER'S ALIVE ALL RIGHT, ME HEARTIES! HEAVE HIM OUT OF THIS CONTRAPTION!
AYE! AN' LET THE CAP'N HAVE A LOOK AT 'IM! OLD BLACK JACQUES WILL GIVE US ALL AN EXTRA RATION OF GROG FOR THIS DAY'S WORK!

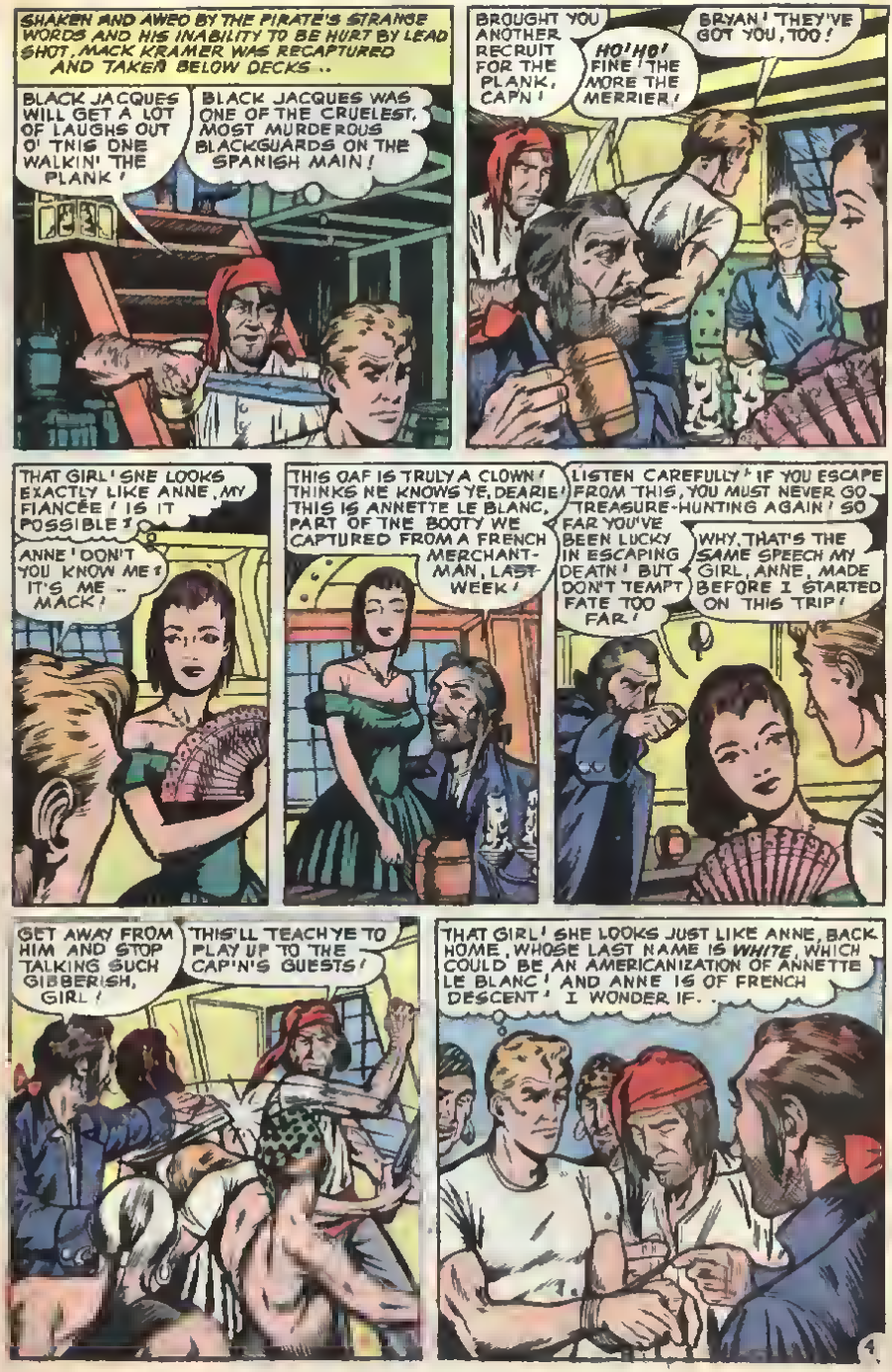

I-- I'M ON BOARD A PIRATE GALLEON! AND IT'S AFLOAT IN A SMALL, COMPLETELY LAND-LOCKED LAKE! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! I MUST STILL BE UNCONSCIOUS DREAMING!


DREAM OR NOT, I MUST BREAK FREE FROM THESE CUTTHROATS!


NOW STAND BACK, ALL OF YOU!
THAT WON'T DO YE ANY GOOD, LAND-LUBBER!


AS THE PIRATES ADVANCED, MENACINGLY, MACK KRAMER NOTICED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT MOST OF THE MEN BORE TERRIBLE WOUNDS WHICH DID NOT BLEED, NOR SEEMED TO BOTHER THEM...
GO AHEAD AND SHOOT, MATEY! LEAD BALLS DON'T BOTHER US!


THE BALL HIT HIM! I CAN SEE THE HOLE IT MADE AND THE PUFF OF DUST FROM HIS SHIRT! YET-- YET HE DOESN'T FALL OR SEEM TO BE HURT!
THE FOOL DOESN'T KNOW HE CAN'T KILL A DEAD MAN! GRAB HIM AGAIN, MATES!

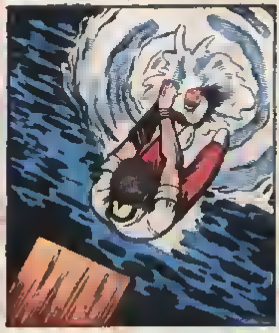

SHAKEN AND AWED BY THE PIRATE'S STRANGE WORDS AND HIS INABILITY TO BE HURT BY LEAD SHOT, MACK KRAMER WAS RECAPTURED AND TAKEN BELOW DECKS ..
BLACK JACQUES WILL GET A LOT OF LAUGHS OUT O' THIS ONE WALKIN' THE PLANK!
BLACK JACQUES WAS ONE OF THE CRUELEST, MOST MURDEROUS BLACKGUARDS ON THE SPANISH MAIN!
BROUGHT YOU ANOTHER RECRUIT FOR THE PLANK, CAPN!
HO! HO! FINE! THE MORE THE MERRIER!
BRYAN! THEY'VE GOT YOU, TOO!
THAT GIRL! SHE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE ANNE, MY FIANCÉE! IS IT POSSIBLE?
ANNE! DON'T YOU KNOW ME? IT'S ME -- MACK!
THIS OAF IS TRULY A CLOWN! THINKS HE KNOWS YE, DEARIE! THIS IS ANNETTE LE BLANC, PART OF THE BOOTY WE CAPTURED FROM A FRENCH MERCHANTMAN, LAST WEEK!
LISTEN CAREFULLY! IF YOU ESCAPE FROM THIS, YOU MUST NEVER GO TREASURE-HUNTING AGAIN! SO FAR YOU'VE BEEN LUCKY IN ESCAPING DEATH! BUT DON'T TEMPT FATE TOO FAR!
WHY, THAT'S THE SAME SPEECH MY GIRL, ANNE, MADE BEFORE I STARTED ON THIS TRIP!
GET AWAY FROM HIM AND STOP TALKING SUCH GIBBERISH, GIRL!
THIS'LL TEACH YE TO PLAY UP TO THE CAP'N'S GUESTS!
THAT GIRL! SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE ANNE, BACK HOME, WHOSE LAST NAME IS WHITE, WHICH COULD BE AN AMERICANIZATION OF ANNETTE LE BLANC! AND ANNE IS OF FRENCH DESCENT! I WONDER IF..







WITH THE CRUEL LAUGHTER OF THE PIRATE CREW ROARING IN THEIR EARS, KRAMER AND BRYAN STEPPED BLINDLY OFF THE END OF THE PLANK, AND FELL DOWN, DOWN, DOWN.





MOMENTS LATER, THEY WERE FREE. THEN...





THE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE OF THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL, ANNETTE, LED THEM SWIFTLY TOWARD THE SAME VIOLENTLY DISTURBED AREA WHICH HAD FIRST BROUGHT THEM INTO THIS OTHER-WORLD. INSTANTLY, THEY WERE TOSSED MERCILESSLY ABOUT AND LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.

BOTH MEN SUDDENLY REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS AS THEY BROKE OUT THROUGH THE ROUGH SURFACE OF THE COVE, ONLY TO FIND...

IT'S NIGHT TIME AND THE SCHOONER IS GONE! THE NATIVE CREW MUST HAVE GOTTEN PANICKY AND SET SAIL!

BUT AT LEAST WE'RE ALIVE, AND SAFE!

WELL, WE MADE IT TO THE ISLAND! YOU KNOW, MACK, I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT HAPPENED! WE MUST BOTH HAVE BEEN KAYOED BY STRONG UNDERWATER CURRENTS AND HAD IDENTICAL DREAMS!

WAIT! I JUST REMEMBERED! THERE IS SOMETHING IN MY POCKET!

BOTH MEN STARED IN DUMBSTRUCK AWE AT THE ANCIENT SPANISH DOUBLOONS KRAMER BROUGHT FORTH FROM HIS POCKET. NEITHER SPOKE BUT BOTH KNEW NOW THAT THEIR UNCANNY, TERROR-FILLED ADVENTURE **HAD HAPPENED!** THE MOONLIT-GLINTING YELLOW PROOF LAY IN KRAMER'S HAND!

AFTER LIGHTING A SIGNAL FIRE TO ATTRACT ANY PASSING SHIP, THEY FELL INTO RESTLESS EXHAUSTED SLUMBER, FILLED WITH STRANGE DREAMS..

THE NEXT MORNING..

WHILE WE'RE WAITING FOR THE SIGNAL FIRE TO ATTRACT A SHIP, LET'S HEAD INLAND AND SEE IF WE CAN FIND THE LAKE AND THE PIRATE SHIP!

IN A WAY, I HOPE WE **DON'T** FIND IT!

THERE SEEMS TO BE AN OLD JUNGLE TRAIL HERE THAT LEADS TO -- HEY! **LOOK!** BLACK JACQUES' FACE!

AHOY, MATES! YOU'RE STEERIN' A STRAIGHT COURSE!

BUT THEN, AS BOTH MEN STOOD FROZEN WITH HORROR, THE GHASTLY FACE IN THE LEAVES BURST APART AND A GAUDY PARROT FLUTTERED FORTH..

SWAAAK! DEAD AHEAD, MATES! DEAD AHEAD!

WHEW! THAT CRAZY OLD PARROT JUST ABOUT SCARED THE HEART OUT OF ME! AND I THOUGHT IT WAS BLACK JACQUES!

I'D SWEAR HE WAS ENCOURAGING US, BY TELLING US WE'RE HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!

AN HOUR AND SEVERAL MILES LATER, THEY SUDDENLY BURST OUT OF THE JUNGLE, ONTO THE SHORE OF A SMALL LAND-LOCKED LAKE, TO SEE ..

IT'S HERE, ALL RIGHT! BLACK JACQUES' PRIVATEER!

BUT EVERY MAN ABOARD HAS BEEN DEAD FOR CENTURIES! YET THEY WERE TALKING TO US AND ROUGHING US UP JUST LAST NIGHT!

I'VE GOT A THEORY ABOUT THIS, BRYAN! HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO THERE PROBABLY WASN'T ANY ISLAND HERE, BUT CHANGING CURRENTS AND DRIFTING SANDS BUILT IT UP AROUND A CRATER OF WATER IN THE CENTER! WE WERE CAUGHT UP IN CONNECTING SPRINGS *BETWEEN* THE SEA AND THE LAKE AND SWEPT IN AND OUT!

THAT SOUNDS LOGICAL! BUT IT *DOESN'T* EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO US LAST NIGHT!

NO! BUT I GUESS THERE ARE SOME THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT JUST *CAN'T* BE EXPLAINED!

SUDDENLY, RIGHT BEFORE THEIR AWED GAZES, THE PIRATE SHIP SILENTLY CRUMBLED AND DISINTEGRATED, LIKE A PILE OF ROTTING OLD WOOD...

LOOK! THE SHIP'S FALLING APART--BREAKING UP!

THE SOONER WE GET OFF THE ISLAND AFTER THIS, THE BETTER I'LL FEEL!

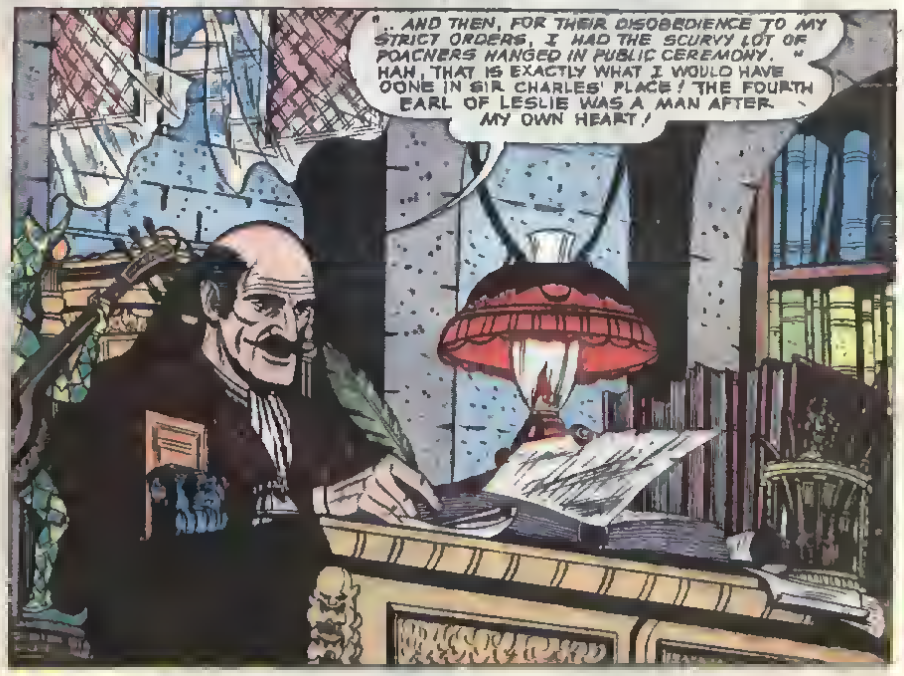
ME TOO! AND I THINK YOUR GIRL FRIEND ANNE WHITE'S GOING TO GET HER WISH AND WE'RE BOTH GOING TO RETIRE FROM THIS DANGEROUS BUSINESS!

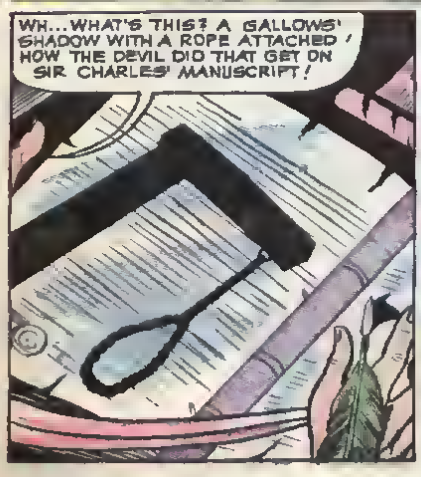
A PASSING SHIP PICKED UP THE STRANDED PAIR. THE NEXT DAY MACK KRAMER, NEVER TOLD ANNE THE NIGHTMARISH STORY OF NADES ISLAND, BUT HE MARRIED HER AND SETTLED DOWN AND GAVE UP TREASURE-HUNTING FOR GOOD!

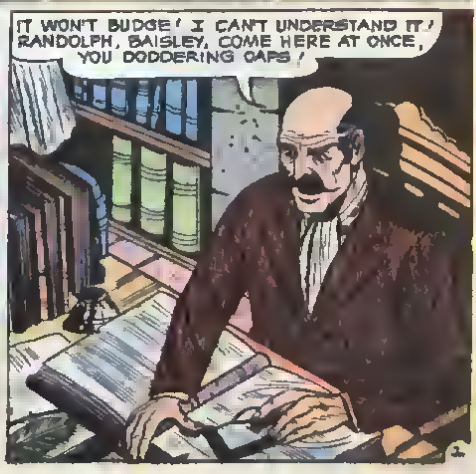
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GALLOWS in the SKY

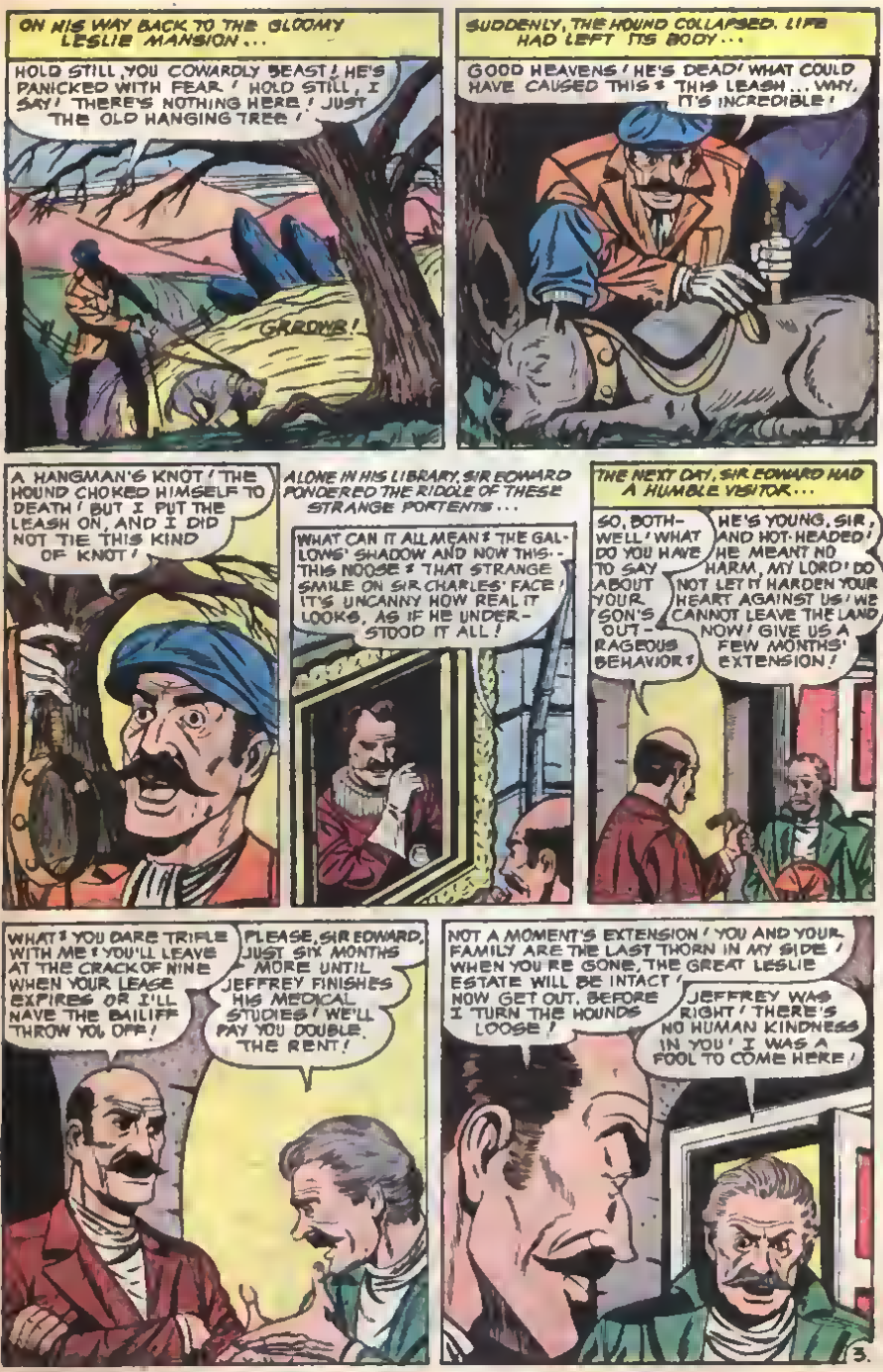
SIR EDWARD WAS A TRUE SCION OF THE LONG LINE OF TYRANNICAL, COLD-HEARTED, DESPOTIC EARLS OF LESLIE. HIS VAUNTING AMBITION BEFORE HE DIED, UNSUCCEEDED BY AN HEIR, WAS TO CONSOLIDATE THE GREAT LESLIE ESTATE, REMOVING ALL HIS MISERABLE TENANTS, AND REKINDLE THE DIMMED HISTORY OF HIS FAMILY NAME BY WRITING THEIR MEMOIRS. HIS EGOTISTIC BRAIN BROOKED NO OPPOSITION TO HIS AMBITIOUS PLANS UNTIL ...







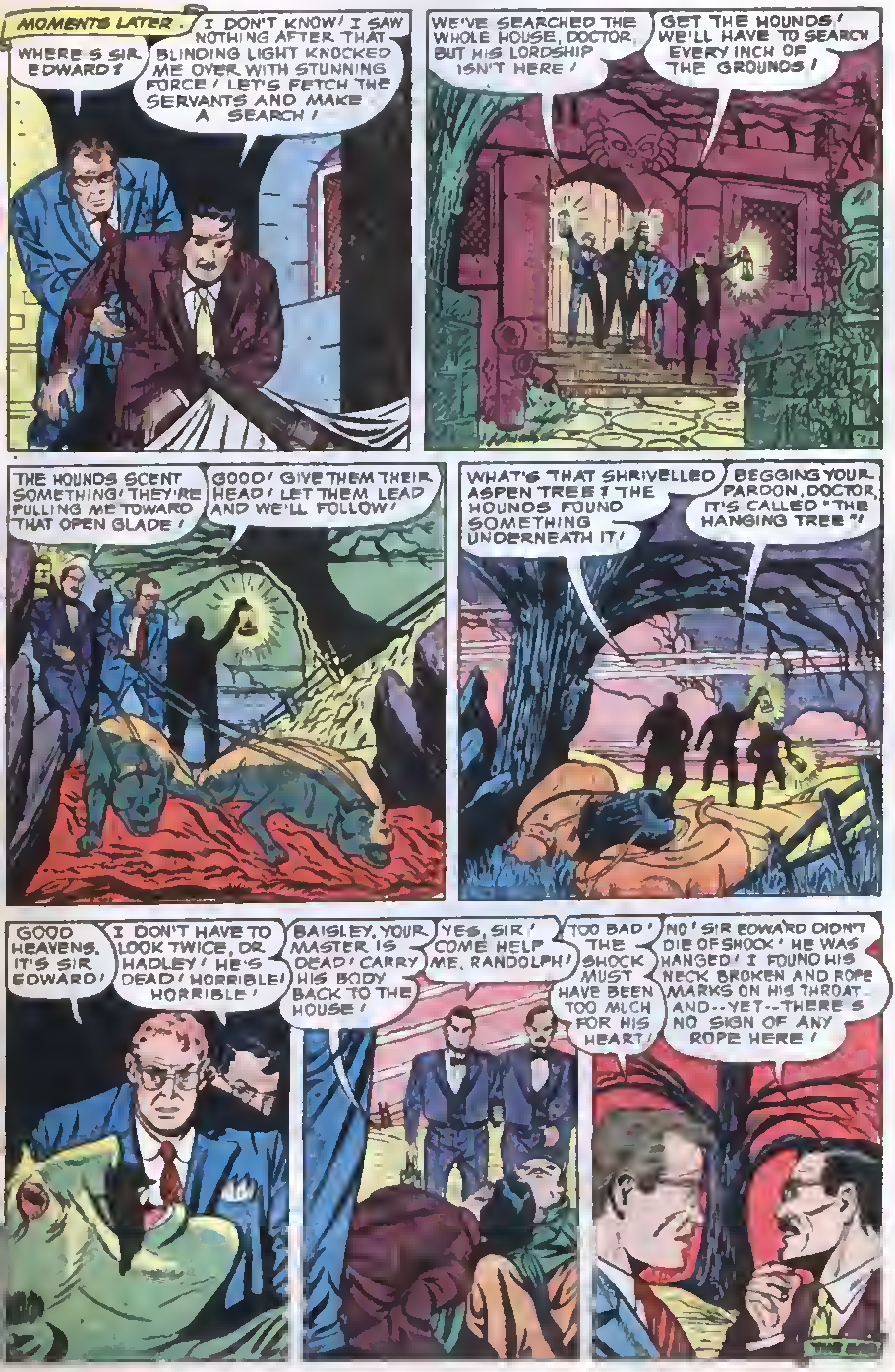

HIS SERVANTS HASTENED TO THEIR ENRAGED MASTER ...
WELL, WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT? DON'T STAND THERE GAPING!
BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR EDWARD, I DON'T SEE A THING!
NO, SIR, NOT A BLESSED THING!
DO YOU THINK I'M CRAZY? BE OFF WITH YOU, YOU RASCALS! IF THERE WAS A POUND NOTE LYING THERE, YOU'D SEE IT FAST ENOUGH!
I-- I'M SORRY, SIR EDWARD, BUT THERE'S NO GALLOWS THERE! JUST A BOOK WITH WRITING IN IT!
MY EYES ARE PLAYING TRICKS ON ME. I MUST GET SOME AIR! A STROLL DOWN TO THE BOTHWELLS TO SEE HOW THAT LAST PEASANT TRASH IS PREPARING TO MOVE OFF MY LAND WILL DO ME GOOD!
WHAM!
HALF AN HOUR LATER...
HO, THERE, TELL YOUR FATHER SIR EDWARD WANTS TO SEE HIM!
HE'S NOT AT HOME, BUT YOU CAN TELL ME ANYTHING YOU WANT HIM TO KNOW... I'M SURE IT CAN'T BE GOOD NEWS, COMING FROM YOU!
YOU YOUNG WHELP! MIND YOUR TONGUE WHEN SPEAKING TO YOUR BETTERS! I'LL REMIND YOU THAT I WANT THE LAND CLEARED BY NINE O'CLOCK NEXT MONDAY, WHEN YOUR LEASE RUNS OUT! I'LL BE RID OF THE WHOLE SCURVY PACK OF YOU!
YOUR LORDSHIP IS MOST KIND! SHALL WE CUT OUR HEARTS OUT AND LEAVE THEM HERE WHEN WE GO?
GO GET THE INSULTING BEGGAR, FANG! GET HIM!
CALL YOUR HOUND OFF BEFORE I BASH HIM ONE!
GRR!
TAKE THAT, YOU GREEDY BEAST! YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR MASTER! NOW, SIR EDWARD, GET OFF OUR LAND! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO IT UNTIL THE LEASE IS UP!
YOU INSOLENT PEASANT! IF I HAD THE POWER, I'D SEE YOU HANGED!
2


ON HIS WAY BACK TO THE GLOOMY LESLIE MANSION...
HOLD STILL, YOU COWARDLY BEAST! HE'S PANICKED WITH FEAR! HOLD STILL, I SAY! THERE'S NOTHING HERE! JUST THE OLD HANGING TREE!
GRROWR!
SUDDENLY, THE HOUND COLLAPSED. LIFE HAD LEFT ITS BODY...
GOOD HEAVENS! HE'S DEAD! WHAT COULD HAVE CAUSED THIS? THIS LEASH... WHY, IT'S INCREDIBLE!
A HANGMAN'S KNOT! THE HOUND CHOKED HIMSELF TO DEATH! BUT I PUT THE LEASH ON, AND I DID NOT TIE THIS KIND OF KNOT!
ALONE IN HIS LIBRARY, SIR EDWARD PONDERED THE RIDDLE OF THESE STRANGE PORTENTS...
WHAT CAN IT ALL MEAN? THE GALLOWS' SHADOW AND NOW THIS... THIS NOOSE? THAT STRANGE SMILE ON SIR CHARLES' FACE! IT'S UNCANNY HOW REAL IT LOOKS, AS IF HE UNDERSTOOD IT ALL!
THE NEXT DAY, SIR EDWARD HAD A HUMBLE VISITOR...
SO, BOTH-WELL! WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT YOUR SON'S OUTRAGEOUS BEHAVIOR?
HE'S YOUNG, SIR, AND HOT-HEADED! HE MEANT NO HARM, MY LORD! DO NOT LET IT HARDEN YOUR HEART AGAINST US! WE CANNOT LEAVE THE LAND NOW! GIVE US A FEW MONTHS' EXTENSION!
WHAT? YOU DARE TRIFLE WITH ME? YOU'LL LEAVE AT THE CRACK OF NINE WHEN YOUR LEASE EXPIRES OR I'LL HAVE THE BAILIFF THROW YOU OFF!
PLEASE, SIR EDWARD, JUST SIX MONTHS MORE UNTIL JEFFREY FINISHES HIS MEDICAL STUDIES! WE'LL PAY YOU DOUBLE THE RENT!
NOT A MOMENT'S EXTENSION! YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE THE LAST THORN IN MY SIDE! WHEN YOU'RE GONE, THE GREAT LESLIE ESTATE WILL BE INTACT! NOW GET OUT, BEFORE I TURN THE HOUNDS LOOSE!
JEFFREY WAS RIGHT! THERE'S NO HUMAN KINDNESS IN YOU! I WAS A FOOL TO COME HERE!


WHEN THE MOVING DATE ARRIVED...
YOU ARE INDEED A COLD-HEARTED SCOUNDREL! YOU HAVE THAT LESLIE BLACK LOOK THAT LIVES ON HATRED!
AT LAST! GOOD RIDDANCE!
IN MY ANCESTORS' TIME A CLOD LIKE YOU WOULD HAVE HANGED FOR THAT REMARK!
AND SO THEY DID! THE FOURTH EARL OF LESLIE HANGED ONE OF MY FAMILY, DAVID BOTHWELL! BUT BEFORE HE DIED, HE CURSED THE LESLIE LINE! "THE LAST LESLIE WITHOUT AN HEIR SHALL DIE UPON THE GALLOWS!" HE SCREAMED! AND I HOPE THAT THIS CURSE BE FULFILLED IN YOU!
THAT EVENING, SIR EDWARD CELEBRATED HIS NEWLY CONSOLIDATED ESTATE...
AAH, NOW THE LESLIE ESTATE IS FREE! IT'S ALL MINE! MY ANCESTORS WOULD BE PROUD OF ME!
AAAIII! NO! WHAT FIENDISH THING IS THIS THAT BLINDS MY EYES!
IT'S HORRIBLE! A FLAMING GALLOWS THAT LIGHTS UP THE WHOLE SKY! DON'T YOU SEE IT?
NO, MY LORD! THERE IS NOTHING THERE, JUST A CLEAR SKY WITH STARS!
YOU NEED A REST, SIR EDWARD!
GET OUT! LEAVE ME! YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO DRIVE ME MAD! GO BEFORE I CANE YOU!
SIR EDWARD'S MIND THROBBED WITH THE SEARING MEMORY OF THE BLINDING VISION! HE WAS TERRIFIED RIGHT DOWN TO HIS VERY MARROW AS HE RECALLED THE STRANGE CURSE OF DAVID BOTHWELL...


THE NEXT NIGHT, SIR EDWARD WAITED FOR THE VISION'S REAPPEARANCE. HE DID NOT WAIT LONG...
THERE'S NO ESCAPE! NOW THERE'S A NANGMAN'S ROPE SWINGING FROM THE GHASTLY THING! I MUST GET HELP FROM A PHYSICIAN!
DR. BORKMAN? YOU MUST COME AT ONCE! I'M SUFFERING TERRIBLY! NO, I CAN'T TELL YOU OVER THE PHONE! YOU MUST SEE FOR YOURSELF!
SOME HOURS LATER...
FRANKLY, SIR EDWARD, I CAN'T FIND A BLESSED THING WRONG WITH YOU, PHYSICALLY! YOU'RE UNNERVED, BUT THAT COULD BE EXPECTED!
YOU SOUND AS IF YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE MY STORY! I TELL YOU I SAW THIS THING!
AND THERE IT IS! AAAR! THERE'S A MAN HANGING FROM THE GALLOWS NOW! GOOD LORD, DON'T YOU SEE IT?
WHERE? BRACE UP, SIR EDWARD! IT'S NOTHING BUT AN ILLUSION! THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE!
WHAT CAN I DO BEFORE I GO OUT OF MY MIND?
I'VE CALLED DR. HADLEY, A TOP-FLIGHT PSYCHIATRIST! HE'LL BE UP FROM LONDON TOMORROW AND I'LL SPEND THE NIGHT WITH YOU! YOUR TROUBLE MUST SURELY BE ALL MENTAL!
THE NEXT EVENING...
AND THEN THESE MISERABLE TENANTS TOLD ME OF THE CURSE! I'VE HAD NO PEACE SINCE THEN, DR. HADLEY!
I SEE! BUT YOU SAY NO ONE ELSE HAS SEEN THESE GALLOWS? DR. BORKMAN SAYS HE SAW NOTHING WHEN YOU POINTED IT OUT TO HIM! DON'T YOU SEE THERE'S NO TANGIBLE PROOF?
THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS? MY BEST HOUND WAS CHOKED TO DEATH BY IT, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TIE THAT KIND OF KNOT!
HMM... MOST STRANGE! IT DOES LOOK VERY PROFESSIONAL! THIS MAKES YOUR CASE MUCH MORE COMPLICATED!

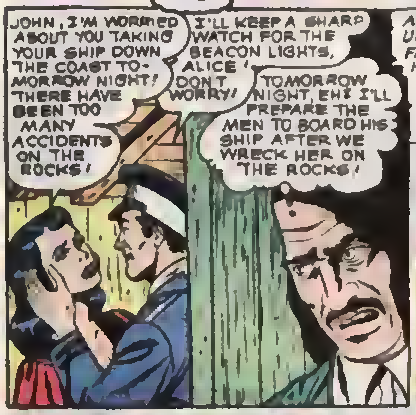

IT SEEMS TO ME YOU'RE SUFFERING FROM A FEAR-RIDDEN GUILT COMPLEX ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR ANCESTORS! THEY WERE A PRETTY HARD LOT, IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING SO!
I HAVE A GUILT COMPLEX? IT'S LAUGHABLE! I'VE NEVER DONE A CRIMINAL THING IN MY LIFE! BUT WHATEVER IT IS, HOW IS IT CURED?
I CAN'T GUARANTEE A CURE, SIR EDWARD, BUT YOU MUST FACE THESE HALLUCINATIONS BRAVELY AND TRY TO DESTROY THEM!
ALL RIGHT! I'M WILLING TO DO ANYTHING TO KEEP MY SANITY!
WE'LL ALL STAND AT THE WINDOW TOGETHER! WHEN THIS GALLOWS APPEARS, YOU MUST FACE IT WITHOUT FLINCHING AND TELL US IN DETAIL ALL YOU SEE! BUT YOU MUST KEEP TALKING AND FIGHTING YOUR FEAR!
HALF AN HOUR PASSED. WHEN SUDDENLY...
THE GALLOWS! IT'S UP THERE IN THE SKY!
GOOD! NOW KEEP SPEAKING AND DESCRIBING IT!
IT'S COMING CLOSER! THERE'S A FIGURE DANGLING AT THE END OF THE ROPE! OWWW! MY EYES ARE BEING BLINDED!
HOLD YOUR GROUND! TALK MAN. TALK!
LET ME GO! AAAR! THE MAN HANGING HAS MY OWN FACE!
HOLD HIM, DR. BORKMAN! DON'T LET HIM GO!
A BLINDING FLASH ENVELOPED THE FIGURES AT THE WINDOW
AIEEEE!
G-R-A-R-R-R-R-S S S-H

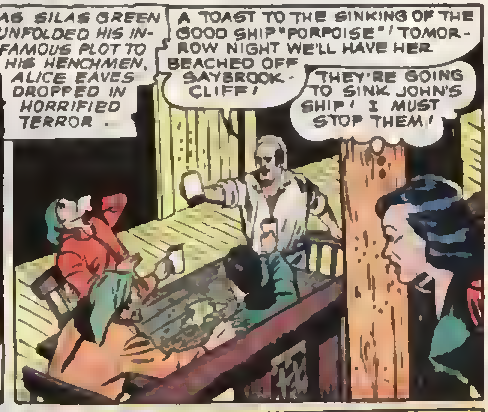

MOMENTS LATER.
WHERE'S SIR EDWARD?
I DON'T KNOW! I SAW NOTHING AFTER THAT BLINDING LIGHT KNOCKED ME OVER WITH STUNNING FORCE! LET'S FETCH THE SERVANTS AND MAKE A SEARCH!
WE'VE SEARCHED THE WHOLE HOUSE, DOCTOR, BUT HIS LORDSHIP ISN'T HERE!
GET THE HOUNDS! WE'LL HAVE TO SEARCH EVERY INCH OF THE GROUNDS!
THE HOUNDS SCENT SOMETHING! THEY'RE PULLING ME TOWARD THAT OPEN GLADE!
GOOD! GIVE THEM THEIR HEAD! LET THEM LEAD AND WE'LL FOLLOW!
WHAT'S THAT SHRIVELLED ASPEN TREE? THE HOUNDS FOUND SOMETHING UNDERNEATH IT!
BEGGING YOUR PARDON, DOCTOR, IT'S CALLED "THE HANGING TREE"!
GOOD HEAVENS, IT'S SIR EDWARD!
I DON'T HAVE TO LOOK TWICE, DR. HADLEY! HE'S DEAD! HORRIBLE! HORRIBLE!
BAISLEY, YOUR MASTER IS DEAD! CARRY HIS BODY BACK TO THE HOUSE!
YES, SIR! COME HELP ME, RANDOLPH!
TOO BAD! THE SHOCK MUST HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIS HEART!
NO! SIR EDWARD DIDN'T DIE OF SHOCK! HE WAS HANGED! I FOUND HIS NECK BROKEN AND ROPE MARKS ON HIS THROAT— AND--YET--THERE'S NO SIGN OF ANY ROPE HERE!

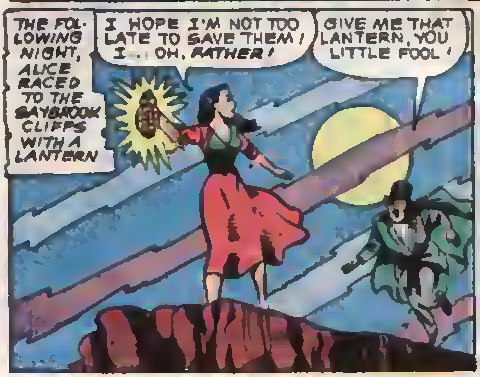
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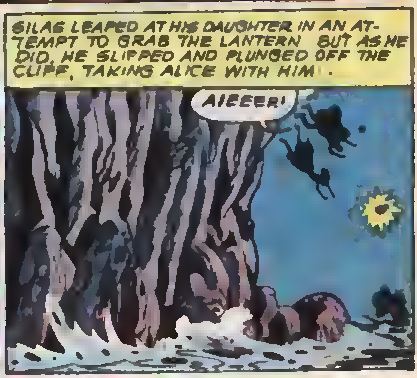
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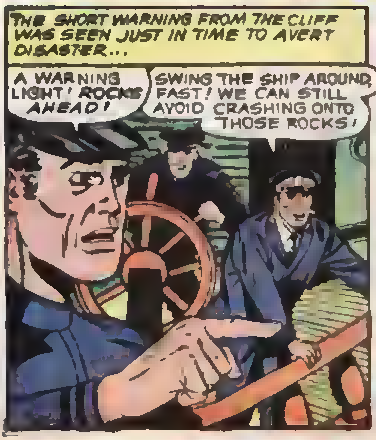
SHIPPING OFF THE COAST OF ENGLAND IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY WAS A RISKY AND PERILOUS TASK. SHIPS WOULD OFTEN SMASH ONTO HIDDEN ROCKS IF A WARNING LIGHT FAILED TO WARN THEM OF THE DANGER. THERE WAS ALSO THE CHANCE OF A WARNING LIGHT BEING PURPOSELY DENIED BY SCHEMING CUTTHROATS WHO WOULD THEN BOARD AND PLUNDER THE HELPLESS SHIP. THE LEADER OF ONE SUCH MOB WAS SILAS GREEN, AN INN KEEPER. HIS DAUGHTER WAS ENGAGED TO THE CAPTAIN OF A SHIP THAT WAS DUE TO SAIL ONE ILL-FATED NIGHT...











ALICE DIED TO SAVE THE LIVES OF HER FIANCÉ AND HIS CREW. TO THIS DAY, MARINERS CLAIM THAT THEY CAN SEE THE FIGURE OF ALICE ON STORMY NIGHTS AT SEA, WAVING HER LANTERN TO WARN SHIPS OF THE IMPENDING DANGER ON THE ROCKS. THIS MYSTERY HAS COME DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS TO US, AND STILL THERE IS NO EXPLANATION TO THIS STRANGE OCCURRENCE!



UNDERWATER MYSTERY

A misty form materialized from the black depths. The form was a little below him, was walking, drifting slowly towards him as it ascended. It maddened him to realize that this figure could rise, while he himself was compelled to descend. The figure came closer, arms outstretched, tortured face twisted into convulsive lines of stark horror.

It was a man. Marchant remembered the stolid, square face of the German who had hurried by, when he had been struggling with the huge body of Zrinyi.

The German gazed at him dully, drifted past. He saw that the man's eyes were closing, with a seeming finality, only the upraised, imploring arms apparently having life. The heavy boots of the German drifted past his head; the figure disappeared.

"Lorna! Lorna, dearest! Where are you! I will come to you, if you will let me know where you are!"

He had stopped descending at last. He was resting on what apparently was the bottom of the abysmal profundity. Black, reeking mire sucked at his feet, made his leaden steps even more difficult, slower. Other figures wandered dimly around him on the filthy, steaming bottom. They were groping, searching . . .

"Lorna! Lorna, where are—"

He saw her. She seemed miles away, her vague figure merging distantly with the black mists. Yet he could see her face, a white blotch that drifted closer and closer.

Sluggishly, with maddening deliberation, his feet carried him towards her. He could see another figure, a huge, distorted figure bearing down upon the girl from above. It was Zrinyi.

The hideous man was nearing the girl, descending upon her with greater speed than Marchant could summon into his lagging legs.

Lorna held out her arms, her terrified eyes beseeching him to hurry, even as she endeavored to move to him. He cursed his deadened legs and their maddening sluggish motions, tried to run, and found that he could move no faster.

"Lorna! Lorna, darling, run to me! Beloved, there is some one trying to come near you. From above. Look above you!"

As though she were unaware that Marchant was shouting to her, warning her, Lorna called to him:

"John, dear! Come to me, please. Hurry, John. *He* is coming!"

Marchant felt the uncanny throb of her voice in his brain. He knew that he had not heard *Lorna* call, something in his mind had telegraphed him she was pleading with him.

"Lorna, darling! I'm coming as fast as I can!"

But he knew he could not hope to reach her before the black, sinister form of Zrinyi would descend upon her. Even as he watched, the hulking man reached out, his huge arms encircling Lorna's waist, pulling her to him. The diabolical face was twisted in a terrible expression, as it pressed near Lorna's white one.

The girl and the clutching monster were locked for a moment, struggling with lethargic, sluggish movements. Lorna succeeded in pulling away from his grasp. Zrinyi reached out, caught her again.

Zrinyi's paws locked their fingers convulsively in a death grip about her slender little throat. The fingers tightened, Lorna's head was forced back, a horrible expression of pain and fear etching across her white face. The huge devil kept on choking, choking. . . .

A black mist of futile rage swam before Marchant's blurred eyes, a dull roaring of his own brain pounding in his ears. If only he could make his leaden legs move faster. . . .

It was too late now. Lorna lay limply on the sucking mire of the bottom. The fiend was bending over her, staring at her. . . . The black mist clouded Marchant's vision again. Rage and frustration clamped as a vise about him.

The mist cleared, and he saw the ghastly form of the monster coming toward him, the face black and demoniacal with a bitter rage. His fingers were extended, clutching towards Marchant. Marchant moved as fast as he could to meet him, horror and revenge stirring his half-mad brain.

Lorna! Where was she? He gazed about as he moved. Shapes, grotesque and horrible, still drifted aimlessly about him, above him. But Lorna had gone. She had disappeared. A moment ago—or was it a century?—she had been on her knees, then on her back, her white throat in the grasp of the ghoulish Zrinyi. Now she had been spirited away, was nowhere. Had Zrinyi killed her, and had she, in death, dissolved into nothing?

A murderous fury consumed Marchant as he suddenly closed with the horrible spectre of Zrinyi. This man had killed Lorna! Had brutally throttled her white, delicate throat. . . .

At first his rage lent him strength, and he seemed to overpower the malicious, inhuman thing with which he was fighting. But Zrinyi's maniacal force soon wore him down. He was suddenly fighting a hopeless, losing battle for what remained of his life.

He felt himself, still struggling weakly, sink into the slimy mire at his feet. Gasping, he tore feebly at the hands about his windpipe, tried to loosen them.

The fingers remained incredibly firm, with a grip of a madman. Then blackness slowly stole over him. He felt his body relax, go limp as his back sogged into the mire.

'Lorna, Lorna!' Darling—I'm dying. I will be—with you—beloved.'

He lay perfectly still.

He was vaguely aware that there were no hands about his throat. He seemed to be floating through time and space. He was ascending. Far above, he could see the glimmer of light. It appeared a little stronger. If he were dead, and drifting toward Elysium, then he would soon be with Lorna.

His head and lungs were suddenly splitting, as though they had been a long time deprived of air. He could drag no air into his seeking body.

His eyes opened, became accustomed to the light. The first thing he saw was the beloved face of Lotoa. He gasped her name, heard her murmur his. Her features were contracted at first in fear, but as he moved, she broke into a tired, relieved smile, pressed her wet face against his, sobbed.

"John! John! Thank heaven!"

A man's heavy, uniformed body was crawling off Marchant's aching chest and stomach. The man, he realized, was a member of the *Arcadia's* crew, and had been working over him, restoring life-giving air into his lungs by means of artificial respiration.

"You're okay now, buddy," the sailor muttered. "And you're lucky."

Marchant looked about him. He was in one of the large lifeboats of the *Arcadia*. There were six or seven seamen in the boat. The others, some fifteen or so, were, like himself and Lorna, passengers on the *Arcadia*. They were huddling together under blankets trying to warm their wet, chilled bodies. The sailors were pulling at long oars, weaving the boat in and out of the debris and wreckage which floated about on the surface of the oily water. From time to time the boat stopped and the crew hauled exhausted human beings out of the water.

One of the bodies floated near, arms fluttering slightly. Marchant saw when the crew had helped the man into the boat, that it was the stolid-faced German—half drowned, gasping hoarsely as he sucked air into his bursting lungs.

Marchant turned to Lorna, pressed her cold cheek against his, kissed her.

'Thank heaven you're all right,' he breathed.

He could see no sign of the *Arcadia*, the huge passenger liner upon which he and Lorna had been returning from a tour of Europe. Nothing but an oily, turbulent surface remained where the big ship had been. He saw distantly the skyline of New York's Lower Manhattan. There were the buildings he had been so glad to see again. They were almost within sight of the harbor. He saw tugboats and fire-boats steaming toward them, their sirens blasting.

"The *Arcadia* sank?" he asked in a low voice.

Lorna nodded.

"Yes. One of the engine rooms caught on fire. The boilers burst, blowing holes through the bottom of the ship. She went down almost at once. Only a few of us were saved."

Marchant remembered the ominous trembling of the polished salon deck, it should have warned him that something was wrong. Then the terrific heat coming through the bulkheads and a ventilator—he had ignored that also, until too late. The explosion—that had been one of the boilers going. The flash of fire, and the sharp blow on his head when he had been hurled against the suddenly slanting deck rail.

It all came back to him now, vividly, rapidly. He had been unconscious — *must* have been—had sunk probably to the bottom of the river along with some of the other passengers. Lorna had gone down too, had risen to the surface before him, after struggling with—

He started as he gazed upon Lorna's throat. The soft white flesh was horribly inflamed, there were ugly, livid welts—*finger marks*.

Lorna!" he rasped. "That man! Zrinyi! That inhuman beast who talked about doomsday, just before we went down! Your throat? Who was he?"

The sailor who had worked over him, said:

"Yeah, buddy, your girl friend asked about him, too. That guy was a nut. We've taken him across before. Some kind of foreigner who went around preaching about how the day of judgment's always coming. He just happened to be spouting it to you when the boilers busted and tore us apart. He went down, too."

'But her throat—the marks—"

"Yeah,' the sailor said. 'Your own neck's scratched up some, too. That guy was drowning. A drowning man who can't swim will grab anything he can get his hands on. First clothes, then neck-strangle.' When he grabbed your neck and the young lady's, it practically knocked you both out, I guess. When you lay still, you sank—and when you sank you wasn't no more help to the drowning guy. He let go. He got onto somebody else, and they both come up eventually. If you twist your head, you can see what happened to that nut.'

Marchant looked at the body floating near the boat. It was the body of Zrinyi. The ghastly, leering face was purple and bloated in death. Marchant turned his head away, a little sick. He held both Lorna's small hands tightly in his.

The sailor looked grimly at Marchant, said:

"Your girl friend and I thought you was never coming up. It musta taken you ninety seconds.'

Marchant looked into Lorna's eyes, drew her closer to him.

"No," he said slowly. 'It took ninety years."

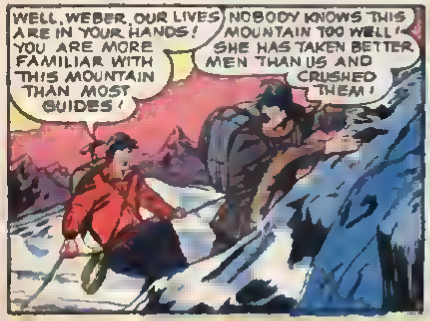
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TRUE TALES of the SUPERNATURAL

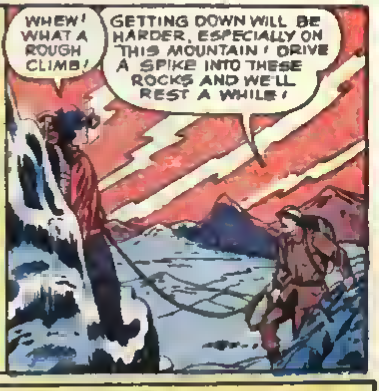
#14

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD MAKE YEARLY TRIPS TO SWITZERLAND TO CLIMB ITS MOST FAMOUS MOUNTAIN, THE MATTERHORN. THE TREACHEROUS MOUNTAIN CHALLENGED THEM ALL AND FEW SUCCEEDED IN REACHING ITS TOWERING PEAK. THIS IS THE ASTOUNDING STORY OF ONE ADVENTURER WHO TRIED...

A YOUNG AMERICAN AND HIS SWISS GUIDE UNDERTOOK THE TASK THAT HAD COST MANY MEN THEIR LIVES.



FROM EARLY MORNING TO LATE NOON, THE PAIR SLOWLY PULLED THEIR WAY ACROSS HAZARDOUS GLACIERS AND UP ANGULAR CLIFFS SOON..



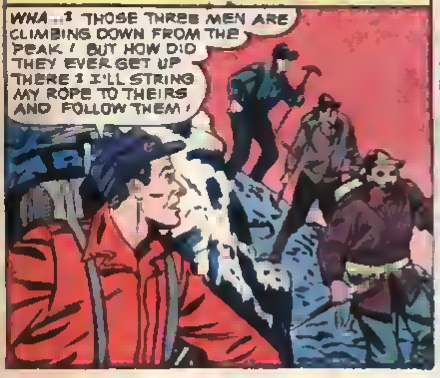
BUT THE INEXPERIENCED CLIMBER DID NOT DRIVE HIS SPIKE SECURELY, AND..



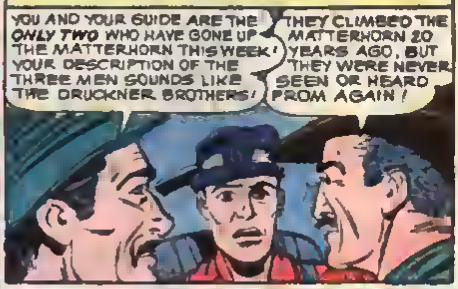
THE GUIDE FELL TO HIS DEATH HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW, LEAVING THE YOUNG AMERICAN ALONE TO FACE THE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FEAT OF DESCENDING THE MOUNTAIN, WITH NIGHT COMING ON...



BUT SUDDENLY HE TURNED AS HE HEARD THE SHUFFLING OF FEET BEHIND HIM..



IN A FEW HOURS THE AMERICAN FOUND HIMSELF BACK IN THE LITTLE VILLAGE WHERE HE HAD STARTED HIS ILL-FATED CLIMB. HE TOLD HIS STORY TO THE VILLAGERS...



THE AMERICAN STOOD IN SHOCKED AMAZEMENT AT HEARING THIS. BUT NO EXPLANATION WAS FORTHCOMING. ANOTHER TALE TO BE FILED AWAY IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

THE END

Creatures of FANTASY





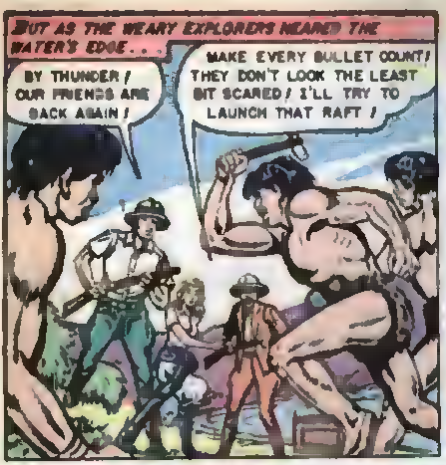



IT WAS NO WORK TO WIDEN THE CRUMBLING HOLE, AND SOON THE EAGER TRIO EMBARKED ON THE DESCENT OF THE CRUDE STAIRCASE.
IT SEEMS TO GO DOWN SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET!
BY JOVE, LOOK AT THOSE DRAWINGS! WE STAND ON THE BRINK OF DISCOVERING A NEW WORLD!
WHAT WAS THAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE THE ROAR OF AN ANIMAL!
PROBABLY JUST THE ECHOES OF WIND CURRENTS, BUT WE'LL TAKE NO CHANCES! EACH OF US WILL CARRY A RIFLE FROM NOW ON!
RROOOOAARR!
AS THEY REACHED THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRCASE, SUDDENLY...
GOOD HEAVENS! LOOK! THE WALL'S CAVED IN AROUND THE HOLE! WE'RE TRAPPED... LOCKED IN! OUR ESCAPE ROUTE IS GONE!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?
CRRAAAASH!
THIS MAY BE OUR TOMB, BUT WHILE I'M ALIVE, I WANT TO EXPLORE WHAT HUMAN EYES HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!
THAT'S HOW I FEEL, SIR CEDRIC! PERHAPS LATER, WE MAY FIND ANOTHER ESCAPE ROUTE!
SUDDENLY, A MAGNIFICENT SCENE UNFOLDED BEFORE THEIR EYES...
THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! JUNGLE VEGETATION AND GIANT FERNS GROWING UNDERNEATH THE EARTH'S SURFACE!
AND THE ROCKS SHED LIGHT! THEY MUST BE PHOSPHORESCENT! MAYBE WE CAN FIND ANIMAL LIFE HERE TOO!
LOOK AT THESE! HUMAN FOOTPRINTS, IF MY EYES ARE NOT DECEIVING ME!
FOOTPRINTS? LET ME EXAMINE THEM!
THESE FOOTPRINTS ARE FRESH! THEY WEREN'T MADE VERY LONG AGO!
AND THERE'S THE CREATURE WHO MADE THEM!


OUT OF THE PRIMEVAL JUNGLE SHUFFLED A BRUTISH FIGURE OF BLOOD-CHILLING APPEARANCE!
LET HIM GET CLOSE! I WANT TO TAKE THIS PICTURE! HE'S THE ORIGINAL HOMO SAPIENS, OLDER THAN ANY REMAINS WE'VE EVER FOUND!
HE'S THE MOST FEROCIOUS LOOKING THING I'VE EVER SEEN!
GOT HIM!
YOU BLINDED HIM! HE'S FRIGHTENED OUT OF HIS WITS!
OW
WWRRR!
COME ON, LET'S FOLLOW HIM! HE MAY LEAD US TO HIS VILLAGE! WHAT A DISCOVERY! THE BRITISH MUSEUM WILL TURN HANDSPRINGS OVER THIS!
YOU FORGET, SIR CEDRIC, WE'RE TRAPPED IN HERE! THE EXIT IS CAVED IN!
TWENTY MINUTES LATER. . .
NOT A SIGN OF ANYBODY HERE! THESE FIRES HAVE BEEN LEFT BURNING! MAYBE WE FRIGHTENED THE WHOLE BUNCH OFF!
THEY'LL BE BACK, ONCE CURIOSITY GETS THE BETTER OF THEM!
SECONDS LATER THEY FOUND THEMSELVES FACED WITH A SOLID RING OF PRIMITIVE MEN . . .
HOLD YOUR FIRE, LESLIE! IF THEY RUSH US, WE'LL BE KILLED! LET'S SEE WHAT THEY WANT!
I JUST HOPE THEY'RE NOT CANNIBALS! THEY CERTAINLY LOOK HUNGRY AND VICIOUS ENOUGH TO EAT US!
HELP! TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF ME, YOU HORRIBLE MONSTER!
THEY DON'T EVEN FEEL OUR BLOWS!

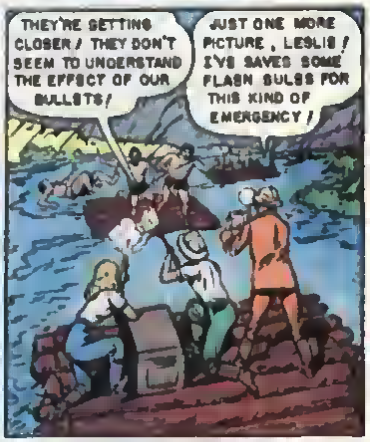

PUT ME DOWN, YOU DEVILS!
NO USE SHOUTING! THEY CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD! SAVE YOUR STRENGTH!
NICE WATCH-DOG, THAT SABER-TOOTHED TIGER! WE'RE LUCKY THEY LEFT US OUR WEAPONS, THOUGH! WE'VE GOT A FIGHTING CHANCE!
BUT WHAT DO THEY MEAN TO DO WITH US? WHY HAVE THEY PLACED US IN THIS CAGE?
WE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH! LISTEN, THEY SEEM TO BE CALLING SOMETHING!
KAAARREEE!
AAAREEE!
HEY, THEY'RE AFTER VIVIAN! LOOK OUT!
NO! DON'T TOUCH ME, YOU BEAST!
AAAREE!
IN A FEW MINUTES VIVIAN WAS BOUND AND CARRIED OFF. . .
WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO VIVIAN? I'LL KILL THE WHOLE LOT OF THEM!
WAIT, YOU MIGHT HIT VIVIAN! HOLD YOUR FIRE! GREAT HEAVENS! WHAT WAS THAT?
ROOOAA
I— IT'S A TYRRANOSAURUS! THEY'RE USING VIVIAN AS A SACRIFICE!
EIIIII!
I HIT THE BEAST! HE'S GOING MAD WITH RAGE! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE AND SAVE VIVIAN!
I'LL CREATE A PANIC WITH THIS PHOTO FLASH POWDER!


PRIMITIVES WERE ALWAYE AFRAID OF FIRE / NOW TO TAKE CARE OF THAT REPTILE /
RODOWWRRR!
THE TORCH IGNITED THE FLASH POWDER, AND
GRRROOOAARR!
STAY WHERE YOU ARE / IT'E THE ORLY EAFE EPOT AROUND HERE WITH THAT BATTLE RAGING DOWN THERE /
ROAARRRR!
GRRROOOOAARRR!
THEY'VE STARTED AN AVALANCHE / THE WHOLE WALL IS GOING TO ROLL RIGHT DOWN ON TOP OF THEM /
WE'LL BE SAFE HERE / WHAT A SPECTACLE / IF I EVER GET THEEE PICTURES BACK, I'LL SET THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD ON ITS EAR /
XAREE /
WALLUUU /
WALLUUU /
IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS THE CARNAGE WAS OVER AND THE UNDERGROUND WAS STILL /
THIE IE OUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE / BUT WHERE DO WE GO?
HEAD FOR THE STREAM / IT MUST LEAD SOMEWHERE / WE'LL FOLLOW THE DIRECTION OF THE FLOW /

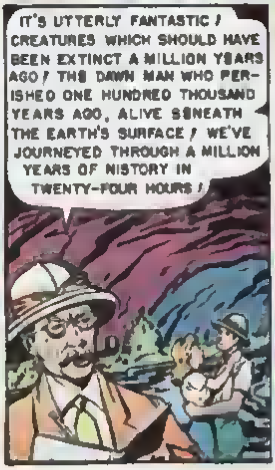

BUT AS THE WEARY EXPLORERS NEARED THE WATER'S EDGE . . .
BY THUNDER! OUR FRIENDS ARE BACK AGAIN!
MAKE EVERY BULLET COUNT! THEY DON'T LOOK THE LEAST BIT SCARED! I'LL TRY TO LAUNCH THAT RAFT!

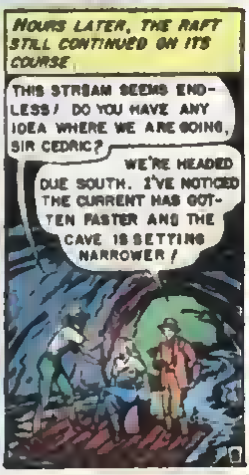

FALL BACK BUT KEEP FIRING! I'LL GET THE CHEST ABOARD AND A POLE TO GUIDE US!
AIEEE!
AIEEE!


HURRY, LESLIE! THEY'VE GOT RAFTS OF THEIR OWN! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A NAVAL BATTLE NOW!


THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER! THEY DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFECT OF OUR BULLETS!
JUST ONE MORE PICTURE, LESLIE! I'VE SAVED SOME FLASH BULBS FOR THIS KIND OF EMERGENCY!


THE PRIMITIVE DREAD OF THE BLINDING FLASH AROUSED TERROR IN THE HEARTS OF THE CAVE-DWELLERS . .
WE'RE RID OF THEM FOR THE TIME BEING!
YES, BUT I WONDER WHAT OTHER ADVENTURES ARE IN STORE FOR US!
YALLUUU
AAANEEE!
AAARR


IT'S UTTERLY FANTASTIC! CREATURES WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN EXTINCT A MILLION YEARS AGO! THE DAWN MAN WHO PERISHED ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS AGO, ALIVE BENEATH THE EARTH'S SURFACE! WE'VE JOURNEYED THROUGH A MILLION YEARS OF HISTORY IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!


HOURS LATER, THE RAFT STILL CONTINUED ON ITS COURSE
THIS STREAM SEEMS ENDLESS! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE WE ARE GOING, SIR CEDRIC?
WE'RE HEADED DUE SOUTH. I'VE NOTICED THE CURRENT HAS GOTTEN FASTER AND THE CAVE IS GETTING NARROWER!


SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING...
LOOK OUT! WE'RE IN THE RAPIDS! HOLD ON TIGHT!
THE TRUNK! SAVE THE TRUNK! IT'S TOO VALUABLE TO LOSE NOW!
DWW! THE TRUNK! IT'S SLIPPING! I CAN'T HOLD IT ANY LONGER!
LET IT GO! SAVE YOURSELF! THESE RAPIDS ARE MURDEROUS!
THE TINY RAFT SHOT THROUGH THE RAPIDS WITH TERRIFIC FORCE. AHEAD THEY SAW SOMETHING WHICH BROUGHT JOY SURGING TO THEIR EMBATTLED HEARTS...
SIR CEDRIC! WHAT'S THAT AHEAD OF US? COULD IT BE..?
IT'S DAYLIGHT, MY BOY! BLESSED DAYLIGHT AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD!
WITH A SHUDDERING CRASH THE RAFT STRUCK A SUBMERGED BOULDER.
WE'VE CAPSIZED! EIIII!
SWIM FOR IT! IT'S NOT FAR TO THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE!
AND SUDDENLY, THEY WERE FLUNG INTO GLORIOUS DAYLIGHT, GASPING, BLINKING, BUT ALIVE...
WE'RE SAVED! A FEW BRUISES AND BUMPS, BUT WE'RE ALIVE AND BACK IN CIVILIZATION AGAIN!
I DIDN'T THINK WE'D MAKE IT!
WE'RE IN SPAIN! THIS IS THE SOURCE OF THE ARAGON RIVER WHICH FLOWS SOUTH! WE'VE TRAVELED FROM FRANCE TO SPAIN THROUGH THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH, AND WE HAVEN'T A SCRAP OF EVIDENCE TO SHOW FOR IT! ALL OUR PHOTO EQUIPMENT WAS LOST!
WHO WOULD BELIEVE US NOW? OUR STORY IS THE STUFF THAT WEIRD DREAMS ARE MADE OF!
AS FOR MYSELF, I PREFER TO THINK OF IT ALL AS JUST A HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE! I SHALL TRY TO FORGET THIS STRANGE ADVENTURE!
THE END



WHICH WILL YOU HAVE ?

For some reason, the goose egg stands for zero . . . nothing.

The nest egg, however, stands for a tidy sum of money, set aside for your own or your children's future.

It's hardly necessary to ask you which you'd prefer.

But it *is* necessary to ask *yourself* what you are doing to make sure you *don't* end up with a goose egg instead of a nest egg ten years from now.

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TAKES INCHES OFF TUMMY!

RAISES ABDOMEN AND KEEPS IT IN!

LIKE MAGIC IT BRINGS IN WAIST

MAKES SPREADING HIPLINES CONFORM TO FIRM BEAUTY

SMOOTHS BAD SLIMS TSIONS

MAKES YOUR CLOTHES FIT BEAUTIFULLY

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